

Google News Initiative × **NewsMatch**

NewsMatch Info Exchange

What's your unique value proposition?



Speakers

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Purpose of today's session

Develop and communicate your value proposition

- Mission Statement
- Newsroom Value Proposition
- Membership Value Proposition
- Components of Value Proposition
- Q&A

Do you have a clear **mission statement**?

How did you develop it?



Do you have a clear **value proposition**?

How is it different? How did you develop it?



Example: Montana Free Press

Montana Free Press is an innovative, nonpartisan, public-powered news organization dedicated to reaching and serving the information needs of all Montanans.

We won't tell you how to think; we'll engage, listen and provide you the tools to make informed decisions by producing independent, high quality reporting that is free and accessible to everyone.



Example: The Applegater

The only news source covering the many communities of the Applegate River watershed, providing information about your neighbors and your neighborhoods you won't find anywhere else.



Example: Sierra County Sun

We are the sole source of independent investigative journalism in our county. We don't just cover what our elected officials say. We watch out for our community's interests by digging into local government's workings and holding our representatives' actions or inaction up to public scrutiny.



You need **two** value propositions

Newsroom value proposition

Your **newsroom** value proposition guides your organization's overall strategy and direction, forcing your newsroom to focus on what it does well. It articulates what your newsroom exists to do, and why you are the one who does it best.

Membership value proposition

Your **membership** value proposition articulates how supporting you also creates value for your members. It articulates the membership social contract. It gives them a reason to join, and gives them a clear picture of what they're opting into.



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A **value proposition** helps you...

- ❑ **Define** what you stand for consistently and clearly
- ❑ **Decide** what not to do when you can't do it all
- ❑ **Articulate** why people should choose you
- ❑ **Distinguish** yourself from competitors and collaborators
- ❑ **Develop** a brand and marketing strategy
- ❑ **Hire** the right people

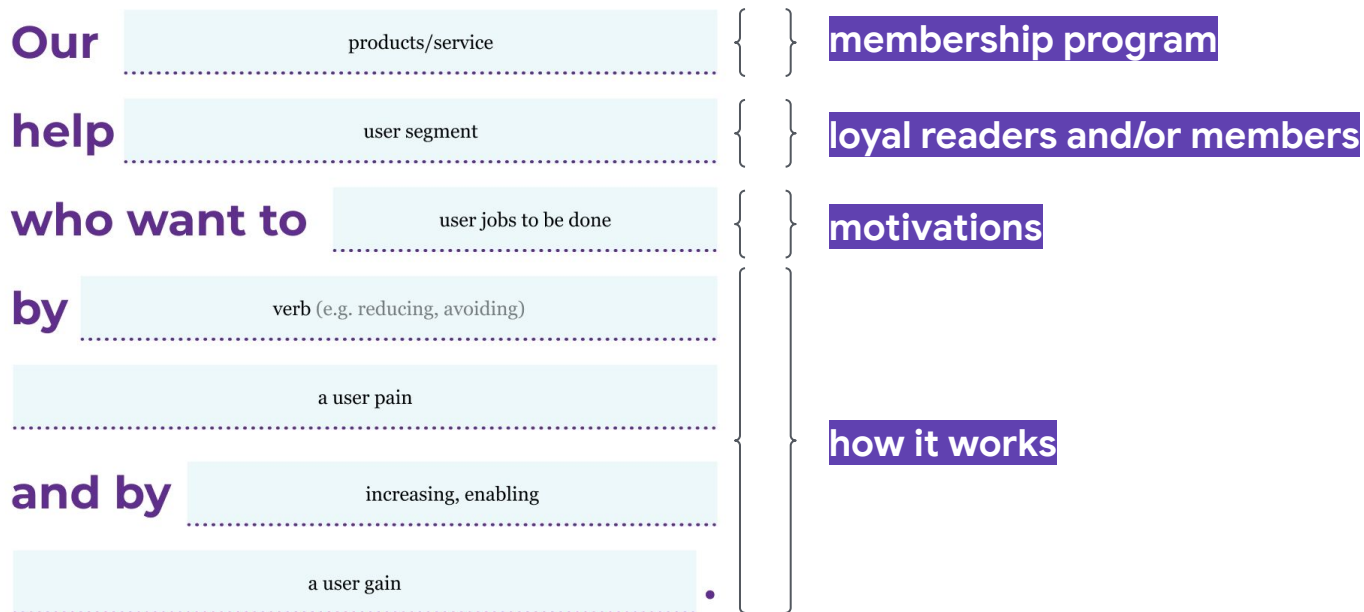


1 Identify your strengths

- ☐ We are the **first** ones to...
- ☐ We are the **only** ones to...
- ☐ We are the **best** at...



2 Identify your value proposition



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Example of a strong value proposition

“For our city to overcome its challenges and reach its potential, we need more people working together on the solutions. The whole idea behind The Devil Strip is to support a community of people who are committed to making Akron a better place to live, which we do by serving Akronites who are already deeply engaged while making it easier for others to get involved.”



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Deconstructing **member motivations**

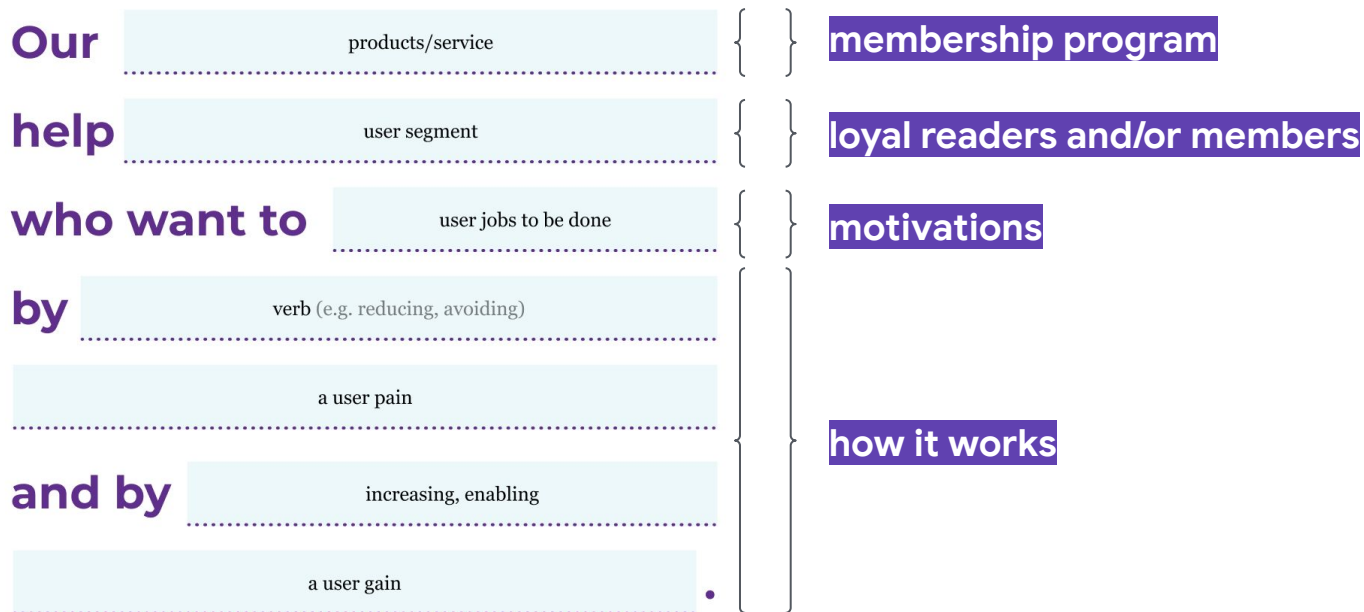
- ❑ A sense of **affiliation** or **belonging**
- ❑ Feeling my concerns are **heard** by the organization
- ❑ Offering the world **something that I think should exist**
- ❑ **Advocacy** for important issues on my behalf
- ❑ A sense of **uniqueness**
- ❑ Being **connected** to other like-minded people
- ❑ Being **connected** to other like-minded organizations
- ❑ **Ease** of use



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2 Identify your value proposition



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Deconstructing “how it works”

- ❑ **Ability** to interact with reporters
- ❑ **Exclusive** or early access to newsletters, editorial meetings, etc.
- ❑ Events / opportunities to **connect**
- ❑ **Merchandise** / swag
- ❑ A good **user experience**, such as easy site navigability or lack of ads



Tips for **identifying** your value proposition

- ❑ **Focus** on what you do well
- ❑ **Avoid** journalism jargon and buzzwords.
- ❑ **Consider** how your membership can be a way to restore something that feels broken.
- ❑ **Think** about how you can **connect** individuals and their passions to a shared larger purpose



Other than fundraising,
how have you used your value proposition
to **shape** your organization?

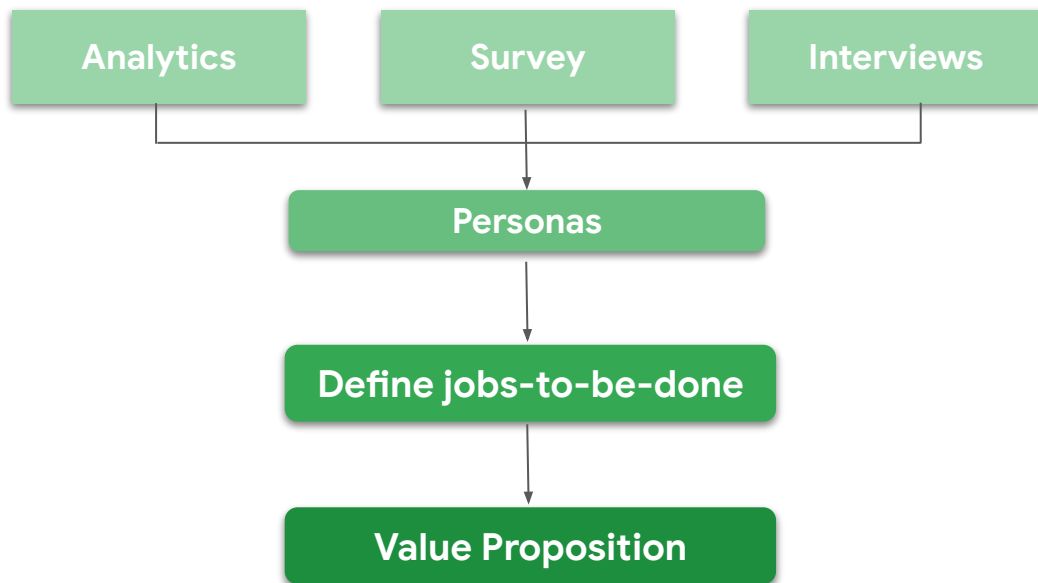
What are the components of a **value proposition**?

- ❑ **Product & Content**
- ❑ **Value Added Benefits**
- ❑ **Marketing & Positioning**
- ❑ **User Experience**

Across each of these, ask:

- What do your readers want?
- What are you currently offering?
- Where's the gap?
- How can you address the gap?

How do you **deeply understand** your readers' information needs?



- 1 **Create and conduct** surveys and interviews
- 2 **Compile** analytics, surveys, and interviews into personas and **identify** their information needs
- 3 **Identify** jobs-to-be-done to meet each persona's needs

Have you used **audience research**
to refine your value proposition?



Q&A

What makes you unique as a **nonprofit
newsroom**?

How will you incorporate this into your value proposition?



What makes you unique as a newsroom with **national reach** or a **topical focus**?



Where does your value proposition show up in your **fundraising messages** and **calls-to-action**?



Additional Resources

Resource	Language	Topic	Experts & Partners
Webinar Available On-Demand	English	Best practices for establishing your unique value proposition	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mary Walter-Brown (News Revenue Hub)2. Ariel Zirulnick (Membership Puzzle Project)3. Lance Knoebel (Berkeleyside)
Reader Revenue Playbook	English	This workshop was created based on Chapter 3 of the Reader Revenue Playbook, “Developing and communicating your value proposition”	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Google News Initiative
GNI Short Guide	English	A brief overview of this webinar that you can share with your team	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Google News Initiative
Membership Puzzle Project Membership Guide	English	Tools and step-by-step instructions on how to build your value proposition	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Elizabeth Hansen2. Ariel Zirulnick

Membership Puzzle Project Summit

August 2 to 6

Day 1: The state of membership in news worldwide – Just how far has this movement spread and what stage of growth is it at? Where is it succeeding?

Day 2: The membership struggle – Where not everyone has the money to give to journalism, or press freedoms are still lacking, the membership puzzle looks a lot different.

Day 3: Twists in your membership journey – Not everything goes according to plan. That's when you have to adapt and try out-of-the-box membership tactics.

Day 4: OK, you've got members now. What's next? – After you prove that people are willing to join your cause, what do you *do* with them?

Day 5: The questions we haven't answered yet – What are the new frontiers? Where does membership have to go next? Which areas are ripe for experimentation?



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Upcoming NewsMatch Webinars

Jul. 26

NewsMatch 101: Getting Started

High-level overview of how NewsMatch works and answers to commonly asked questions

Jul. 28

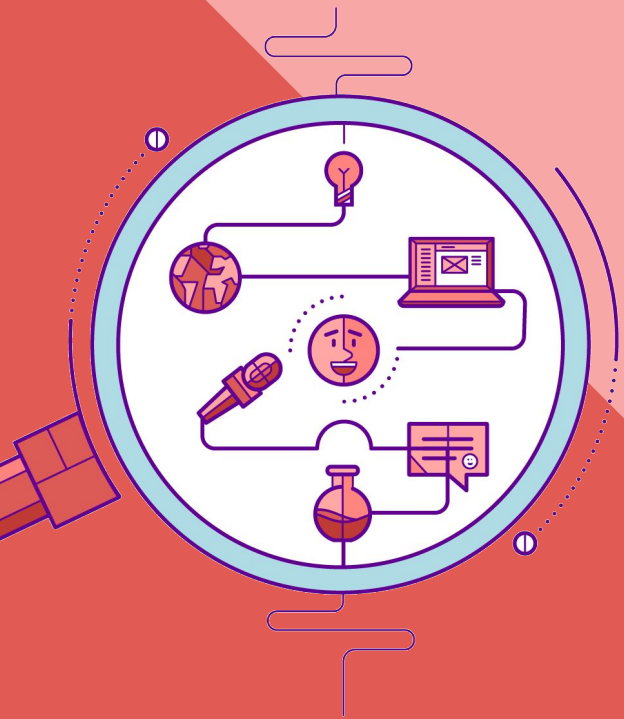
Building your local match: What are your campaign goals?

A fundraising plan is an essential component of any successful campaign. How much are you looking to raise?

Aug. 24

Building your local match: The Local Match Donor Cycle

Taking a strategic approach to moving your donor from one stage to another



Identifying your value propositions

Entrepreneurial Journalism Creators Program

Richland Source's strengths

- We are the first ones to deliver a free, all digital alternative to legacy news organizations for our community.
- We are the only ones who consistently engage and invite readers into the journalistic process.
- We are the best at delivering a news product which has a solutions orientation and dedication to community at its center.



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Richland Source's value proposition

Our **solutions-focused local journalism** helps readers who want to **understand the whole story of the community** by **eliminating the news fatigue caused by just covering what's wrong** and replacing it with a **more holistic and nourishing local news experience** that helps our city reach its full potential.



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richlandsource

Our community deserves to hear the whole story.

We uncover through our journalism effective responses to problems that hold us back from our true potential. In supporting us, you help us guide our community to a better future.

Richland Source's *membership* value proposition

Our membership program helps members who want to make their city a better place by bridging the gap between them and the newsroom that covers their lives, and by forming a vital partnership that fosters trust, togetherness and growth through community-funded journalism.



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10 steps Richland Source followed to raise \$250k for local news reporting

Step 1. Do your values inspire support?

Step 2. Involve the newsroom

Step 3. Figure out your value proposition

Step 4. Lay out the problem and the stakes

Step 5. Be specific about your goals

Step 6. Hone your offer

Step 7. Identify your prospects

Step 8. Make the calls

Step 9. Say thank you.

Step 10. What happens after you raise that cheddar?

